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STATINTL

Fulbright Stands Pat

Ignores Hint That LBJ Might Like To Talk With Him About Vietnam

By Rowland Evans and Robert Novak

A DEADLY SERIOUS effort by top aides of President Johnson to moderate Sen. J. W. Fulbright's harsh criticism of the President's Asian policies has wound up a total failure.

Acting with the President's encouragement, these aides recently attempted, without success, to draw the chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee into a private, discreet dialogue on what Fulbright calls the President's ambition to make the United States "a major Asian power."

Nonsense, the President's aides told Fulbright. The purpose of U.S. policy in Asia and the reason for the U.S. stand in Vietnam are to help maintain an Asian equilibrium and prevent dominance by Communist China.

In an effort to make this point with Fulbright, presidential aides quoted Lee Kwan Yew, leftist but anti-Communist prime minister of Singapore: "Hundreds of Vietnamese are dying every day—for what? For Vietnam? Not to decide that Vietnam shall not be repeated."

China's military strength and nuclear capability, Fulbright was told, make it mandatory for the United States to stand behind small Asian nations and help finance regional economic programs. These small nations are no more U.S. "puppets" than Denmark and Norway, which are protected from Soviet power by the United States. Objection was voiced to Fulbright's inaccurate designation of them as "client" nations.

Fulbright was urged by the presidential aides to go to Asia—South Korea, Japan, Formosa, Thailand—to see for himself. The Senator might then discover that the "client states," allegedly manipulated by endless money from Washington, are in fact independent political units that can grow strong and prosperous if the Chinese threat is contained.

But to all this, set forth in detail, the Senator showed no interest. Hints that the President would like to spend a quiet evening discussing U.S. policy in Asia were met only by silence. Indeed, the only visible product of the attempted dialogue was unusual criticism by Fulbright on the Senate floor of Walt Whitman Rostow, the President's top security aide.

Staff Shake Up

VICE PRESIDENT Humphrey is coming sharply to grips with one of his most annoying problems: the composition of his staff. The Humphrey staff has been a subject of considerable criticism the last 18 months.

William Welch, top aide to Sen. Philip Hart of Michigan since 1959, will become the Vice President's legislative assistant and a key policy adviser. Welch, once research director of the Democratic National Committee, is particularly respected by the civil rights movement—where Humphrey is losing ground.

Humphrey also is adding a new political aide, and a New Frontiersman at that. Martin McNamara, a politically active Washington lawyer who supported John F. Kennedy for President against Humphrey in 1960, will try to smooth relations with Democratic leaders, which have become tangled since Humphrey became Vice President.

A footnote: A staff foul-up was responsible for Humphrey's failure to answer an invitation to address the state convention of Mississippi's biracial Young Democrats Aug. 27. The invitation had been put in the "autumn schedule" folder. It was retrieved, and now Humphrey plans to attend.

A Case of Loyalty

CHARLES PERCY has been quietly informed that Sen. Jacob Javits of New York re-

gretfully can't campaign for him against Democratic Sen. Paul Douglas in Illinois.

Javits and Douglas fought together for many civil rights bills in the Senate, and Javits simply does not feel free to oppose his old comrade. In 1962 when liberal Republican Javits was running for re-election to the Senate, Douglas refused to campaign against Javits.

Javits did campaign in behalf of Percy's unsuccessful bid for governor in 1964. But when the Chicago Tribune and conservative Republicans attacked Javits, Percy suggested it might indeed be better for him to cancel. Though Javits was hurt and irritated by this disinvitation, friends say it plays no part in his 1966 decision.

Other liberal Republicans believe Javits is wrong. They feel he should do all in his power to help Chuck Percy get to the Senate as a force for liberal Republicanism, even at the risk of weakening an old friendship. A Javits visit would be invaluable in attracting support for Percy from liberals, particularly Negro and Jewish voters.

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